

MINUTES

Purpose: Engage Okaloosa County community members in a health improvement process through an open, two-way dialogue to impact harmful events such as pedestrian injuries, falls, and substance use and to reduce the housing burden.

Attendees: Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; Bernard Johnson, Florida Power and Light; Christy Craig, Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa); Trisha Dall, FDOH-Okaloosa; Johnathan Laird, City of Niceville; Emily Pickens, DOH-Okaloosa; Mayor JB Whitten, City of Crestview; Amy Hanson, City of Niceville; Karen Brown, Crestview Housing Authority; Tim Gibson, City of Fort Walton Beach; Elizabeth “Beth” Smith, DOH-Okaloosa; Amanda Colwell, FDOH-Okaloosa; Teri Schroeder, Okaloosa County School District; Lida Fratangelo, North Okaloosa Medical Center; Robin Neese, Children’s Home Society of Florida; Katie Scott, DOH-Okaloosa; Greg Cain, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Anthony Sawyer, 90Works; Chris Hawkins, CDAC Behavioral Healthcare; Brent Couch, Simply Healthcare.

Opening – Elizabeth “Beth” Smith

- Elizabeth “Beth” Smith opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Minutes from the February 16, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Emily Pickens reviewed the meeting’s purpose and agenda. She also shared results from the Community Engagement Survey from the previous meeting.

Opioid Presentation – Katherine “Kat” Beedie

- Kat Beedie opened the meeting by providing an opioid presentation to the group.
 - She presented data on prescription overdoses, deaths, and Naloxone administrations in Okaloosa County and across the state of Florida.
 - The presentation slides and the map of Naloxone administration in Okaloosa County will be shared with the meeting minutes.
- Following the presentation, the group engaged in open discussion and posed questions to Kat related to substance use.
 - Based on the questions asked, Kat will locate information about how prescriptions are allocated by residents and determine if it is possible to identify repeat offenders receiving Naloxone by EMS.
 - Karen Brown asked if there was a way to identify Naloxone administration by agencies other than EMS.
 - Greg Cain shared EMS now records Naloxone administrations even if EMS was not the first to administer. Chief Robert Bage added law enforcement uses HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas) program to track their administrations and other indicators.

Action Item Updates – Robert Bage and Mayor JB Whitten

- The group engaged in open discussion regarding planning efforts and pedestrian and pedalcyclist injuries in the different municipalities.

- Johnathan Laird stated the pedestrian issues in Niceville surround the lack of handicap ramps. There is a sidewalk program in progress where city funds are allocated to implement new sidewalks or fix existing sidewalks. He also stated they require builders to include sidewalks in all new developments and they must connect to sidewalks outside of the new construction. Lighting was also stated as a community concern.
 - Chief Bage shared that the City of Fort Walton Beach found success by replacing old lights with LED lights on busy streets like Eglin Parkway.
 - Johnathan also shared the City of Niceville has found success partnering with Okaloosa County to fund and execute sidewalk projects.
- Mayor Whitten shared the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) does sidewalk planning with Crestview. He will contact them to investigate recurring issues that pedestrians and drivers need to be educated on.
- Tim Gibson shared that Fort Walton Beach has an ongoing sidewalk master plan but faces implementation barriers due to lack of manpower. The City of Fort Walton Beach also has a sidewalk requirement in place for builders, but the issue is not with subdivisions but instead, sidewalks that lead to nowhere.
- Both Niceville and Fort Walton Beach report being unaware of issues with bicyclist incidents, particularly due to a lack of safe biking areas.
- Karen shared that she met with Shoal Elementary School and the Student Advisory Council recently surrounding pedestrian safety. They plan to develop a poster competition and presentation to spread education. She anticipates meeting with other schools to get this messaging out.
- Chief Bage suggested the group develop a pedestrian safety best practices guide. This could include a model ordinance to provide guidance on resolving issues like sidewalks to nowhere, lack of handicap ramps, and school zone traffic safety concerns. He shared the group's role should be to provide best practices to schools, municipalities, and other entities to implement them.
 - Karen raised concern about extending roadways to create new sidewalks in residents' yards. Chief Bage clarified that the first few feet back from the street are public right of way and not property of the homeowner. Tim agreed and stated the number of feet from the road varies by city and area.
 - Teri Schroeder shared there is new legislation being proposed that may cause schools to implement earlier start times. She raised concern of the necessity for lighting and sidewalks for young students, especially should this pass.

Action Plan – Robert Bage and Mayor JB Whitten

- The group agreed to develop a best practices guide.
- Chief Bage suggested the group determine topics for the media campaign. The group discussed addressing common misnomers, using a crosswalk, driver awareness, and pedestrian awareness.
 - Mayor Whitten volunteered the City of Crestview Public Information Officer to develop the campaign.
- Attendees approved updated goals and objectives for pedestrian injuries, older adult falls, and substance use. The housing objective will be finalized at the next meeting.

Open Discussion – All

- Mayor Whitten shared EMS will be holding a Naloxone training at the Crestview Community Center on March 30, 2023, at 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Attendees will be shown how to administer Naloxone.
- Emily announced the [Okaloosa County Resources Fair](#) will be held on April 4th from 12:00PM to 6:00PM at Trinity United Methodist Church in Fort Walton Beach. The purpose of the event is to have on-site services readily available for residents to utilize or sign-up for. Vendor registration is full, but members are encouraged to share the word.

Closing – Trisha Dall

- Trisha thanked attendees for participating and asked them to complete the meeting evaluation form to provide feedback.

Next Meeting – Thursday, April 21st at 9:00 AM at DOH-Okaloosa in Fort Walton Beach

Action Items	Owners	Deadline	Status
Submit action items prior to next meeting if not attending	ALL	Each meeting	Ongoing
Prepare to finalize housing objective	ALL	April 21 st	Not started
Invite housing subject matter experts to next meeting for objective discussion	ALL	April 21 st	